



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO Department of Agriculture/Measurement Standards

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LIGHT BROWN APPLE MOTH – QUARANTINE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE PORTIONS OF MORRO BAY

San Luis Obispo, CA, October 1, 2013 -- Separate detections of the Light Brown Apple Moth in the City of Morro Bay will expand an existing quarantine to encompass an additional 6 square miles. The expansion will move the quarantine boundary from Cayucos to just south of Highway 41 in Morro Bay. The quarantine boundary extends approximately 1.5 to 2 square miles inland. The moths were discovered as a result of the County Agricultural Commissioner's ongoing pest detection program. The expanded quarantine, which restricts the movement of certain plants, fruits and vegetables, green waste and other related material, is mandated and was developed in conjunction with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The Light Brown Apple Moth, native to Australia, can affect over 2000 species of plants including native plants, ornamentals and food crops. The caterpillar stage of this insect can destroy, stunt or deform young seedlings, spoil the appearance of ornamental plants and can injure citrus, grapes and deciduous fruit crops. Currently multiple coastal California counties are under quarantine for the presence of this pest. California is the only known infested area in the continental United States for Light Brown Apple Moth.

"We have contacted and are working with agricultural producers in the area in an effort to contain this pest by inspecting and certifying plants and agricultural commodities for movement outside the quarantine area, and to minimize the impact to local agriculture as much as possible," said Martin Settevendemie, County Agricultural Commissioner. "We continue to urge the public in Morro Bay and the north coast to contact our department at 805-781-5910 before moving plants outside the quarantine area and to purchase plants from local nurseries to avoid transporting this and other pests into the County," continued Settevendemie.

CDFA is the lead agency charged with eradication of quarantine pests statewide. CDFA officials will closely monitor the local situation and assess the need for eradication treatments.

For more information visit the CDFA website at www.cdfa.ca.gov/lbam or the Ag Commissioner's website at www.slocounty.ca.gov/agcomm.

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